

These are just a few of their many service projects.

American Legion Post 1214 is an asset to Southwest Missouri, and I am grateful for their selfless service and tireless dedication to improving the lives of veterans of every era, as well as inspiring the next generation of military service members. Please join me in congratulating them for their 10 years of service.

HONORING FREDDIE JOHNSON

HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a special man, Freddie Johnson, from Frankfort, Kentucky. Mr. Johnson is well-known in the bourbon industry for his service as Distillery VIP Visitor Lead for Buffalo Trace Distillery.

Mr. Johnson was born in Bourbon County and his family moved to Frankfort when he was 5 years old. His grandfather, Jimmy Johnson, Sr., began working at Buffalo Trace in 1912. He was there for 52 years and became the first African American warehouse foreman. His father, Jimmy Johnson, Jr., joined him at Buffalo Trace in 1936 and served as warehouse supervisor. Young Freddie played at Buffalo Trace as a child. In 2002, Johnson retired early from a job in Atlanta to return home, work with his father, and become the third generation of his family to work at Buffalo Trace.

Mr. Johnson has become famous for providing entertaining and informative tours of Buffalo Trace to thousands of guests each year. For his contributions to the bourbon industry, he was inducted into the Bourbon Hall of Fame in 2018. He is a recipient of the 2015 ROSE (Recognition of Service Excellence) award and the 2017 Lexington Hospitality Award. In 2024, he was chosen to be part of the Whisky Magazine Hall of Fame, becoming their first Black member. The Kentucky Black Bourbon Guild has a scholarship named in his honor.

Mr. Johnson has contributed greatly to the success of the bourbon industry, one of Kentucky's signature industries. It is my honor to lift up the life of this true Kentucky treasure, Mr. Freddie Johnson, and celebrate his iconic career at Buffalo Trace.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE HONORABLE GERALD E. LOEHR

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the Honorable Gerald E. Loehr, a public servant who served with distinction and dedicated his life to the pursuit of justice.

Hon. Gerald E. Loehr was born into a Yonkers family with a longstanding tradition of politics and public service on May 19, 1943. His great-grandfather, John J. Loehr, served as a Yonkers Alderman (Councilman); his grandfather, Joseph F. Loehr, was the Mayor of Yonkers from 1932 to 1939; his mother, Ger-

trude Sweetman, was a civil servant; and his father, John F. Loehr, was an attorney and an Administrative Law Judge. With passion and principle, he proudly followed the family tradition.

He graduated from Manhattan College in 1965 and Fordham Law School in 1969. He began his distinguished career as a New York City Assistant District Attorney under the legendary Frank Hogan from 1969 to 1973. He then moved into private practice at the firm of Nobile and Magarian from 1973 to 1975.

Returning to the public sector in Yonkers, Loehr served two terms as the Third Ward Councilman from 1975 to 1979 and one term as Mayor from 1979 to 1981. Upon leaving the Mayor's office, he returned to private practice as a founding partner of the law firm Ecker, Loehr, & Ecker, LLP, where he worked until 2004.

In 2005, he was elected as Judge in the Westchester County Court. In 2006, he was appointed as an Acting State Supreme Court Justice, and in 2012, he was elected to serve as a State Supreme Court Justice in the 9th Judicial District.

Loehr was a devoted husband and father, survived by his beloved wife, Susan Newman Loehr, also a public servant and retired Westchester County Commissioner of Jurors. He is also survived by his older brother, John Loehr, and six children from two marriages: Peter, Janine (Barbanell), Melissa, Jonathan (Newman), Cariana (Bulman), and Gerald E., II. He also leaves behind 15 grandchildren, who will miss him dearly.

Today, Yonkers, the State of New York and our Nation, have lost a dedicated protector of justice. It is my hope that his wife, children, and grandchildren can draw strength and comfort from his many contributions. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying homage to a lifetime of service and in remembering the Honorable Gerald E. Loehr.

RECOGNIZING THE 70TH BIRTHDAY OF GERALD MORRIS

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I ask for the House's attention today to recognize the 70th birthday of Gerald Morris. Gerald was born to Emma Lois and Toby Lee Morris on December 4, 1954, in Anniston, Alabama. He is one of six children. He graduated from Saks High School in 1972.

On February 22, 1985, Gerald married Waltina Morris. They were blessed with five children and seven grandchildren.

Gerald was inspired by his uncle, Edgar Morris, who was a tailor. He had his shop in downtown Anniston. Gerald worked at a men's clothing store named Phil's Men's Store and began doing alterations for customers there. He attended trade school and opened his own shop in downtown Anniston named Morris Alterations in 1981. As life would have it, his son was able to open a men's clothing store right across the street from his own storefront. Two of Gerald's daughters work alongside him daily.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Morris switched gears at the shop and began making

a variety of popular masks that sold from Alabama to Connecticut. After the pandemic, work was busier than ever as people went back to their social engagements, proms and weddings, they needed his artful craft to make their clothing perfect for them.

Gerald has been in business for almost 44 years and attributes his success to all of his hard work and loyal customers. He has no plans of retiring. Gerald and his store are a fixture of downtown Anniston and Gerald gives back to his community by helping local schools.

The Morris family attends New Jerusalem AFM Church of God.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Gerald on this milestone and wishing him a very happy birthday.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE PAT GAROFALO

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Minnesota House Representative Pat Garofalo. First elected in 2004, Representative Garofalo has honorably served in the Minnesota Legislature for the past twenty years.

During his time in office, Representative Garofalo exhibited a profound willingness to serve his fellow southern Minnesotans, not only as their voice in the House Chamber, but also by his leadership on numerous House committees throughout the years. In 2008, Representative Garofalo was elected to the position of assistant majority whip for the legislative session, and later became chairman of the Education Finance Committee, as well as the Job Growth & Energy Affordability Committee.

Representative Garofalo has done an exemplary job representing his constituents in Dakota, Goodhue, and Rice counties for the past two decades, and I consider it a true honor to have previously served alongside him in the Minnesota State Legislature.

I am grateful for Representative Garofalo's years of dedicated public service to southern Minnesota, and I wish him the warmest congratulations on his retirement.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF GENE R. MOFFITT

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to announce the passing of Gene R. Moffitt. Gene was an individual full of ambition, compassion and dedication towards his community. I urge us all to celebrate and remember the life of this incredible community leader, husband, friend, father, and grandfather.

Born in Independence, Missouri on August 6, 1941, Gene attended William Chrisman High School before heading to Central Missouri State University to continue his academic journey. Eventually, he began what

would become a stellar career spanning across four decades at Block & Company, Inc. Realtors. Starting at an entry level position as a Sales Associate in 1974, Gene was active in sales, leasing and development projects. Through the years, his expertise in the industry grew as he oversaw the completion of various projects in retail, office, commercial, and investment projects.

As he continued to work his way up the ladder at Block & Company, Inc. Realtors, Gene brought along his enthusiasm, knowledge and work ethic to create new approaches to real estate. Most notable, Gene became a leader in the industry when he initiated the first new life-style center in the region, Zona Rosa, a mixed-use retail, office, and industrial complex in the Greater Kansas City area. His experience was sought after and highly regarded among those in the industry.

Among his many achievements, Gene played an important role in relocating the St. Joseph Hospital, which later became the Linwood Shopping Center, revitalizing an inner-city area that was facing decline. The finished project became a new and expanded retail development which led to the City of Kansas City to be designated in 1986 as an "All American City" by the Citizens Forum on Self Government/National Municipal League and USA Today. Additionally, Gene worked as the Development Consultant for the Blue Parkway Town Center, a redevelopment project spearheaded by the Swope Parkway Health Center.

Though Gene has passed, his legacy and impact on Kansas City will remain long past our mortal lifetimes. I am reminded of Mark 10:45—"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Gene's life was one dedicated to serving others and bettering the lives of countless people. Gene is survived by his loving family, friends, and wife of 58 years, Pamela. As we celebrate and remember the decades of devoted service from Gene, let us be inspired by his commitment to better his community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RICHARD HUDSON

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed a vote. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 480 and YEA on Roll Call No. 481.

RECOGNIZING STEVE YEAKEL

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Steve Yeakel, who is retiring as President and CEO of the Virginia Association of Community Banks (VACB) after 13 years of distinguished service to Virginia's community banking industry.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Yeakel has been an unwavering advocate for Virginia's commu-

nity banks, which serve as the economic backbone of our local communities. Under his leadership, VACB has grown to represent more than 100 community banks and vendor partners, providing essential financial services to families and businesses across the great Commonwealth of Virginia. Mr. Yeakel's commitment to excellence was recognized by his peers when he received the 2021 CEO Award of Excellence by from the Virginia Society of Association Executives. His leadership style, emphasizing relationship-building and collaborative problem-solving, has strengthened the voice of community banking in both Richmond and Washington. During his stewardship, VACB successfully navigated serious challenges in the industry, from regulatory changes to technological transformation. Mr. Yeakel has been able to achieve such impressive accomplishments particularly due to his ability to foster productive dialogue between VACB members and Congressional delegations over the years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing Mr. Yeakel's significant contributions to Virginia's banking industry and the communities it serves. His legacy of leadership, advocacy, and service will continue to benefit Virginians for years to come. I wish him and his family all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

MILLIE DUNN VEASEY POST OFFICE

SPEECH OF

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9580, to name a post office in North Carolina after Millie Dunn Veasey. As has been noted, she was one of the 855 women from across our country who would serve with the historic Women Army Corps 6888, Central Postal Battalion (Six Triple Eight) during World War II.

The Six Triple Eight was the only African American Women's Army Corps Battalion unit deployed overseas during WWII. Their efforts to resolve a monumental months long backlog of millions of pieces of mail played a critical role in maintaining morale for those fighting in the European Theater.

In England and then France, they sorted millions of pieces of mail while facing challenging social and war conditions. They not only completed their mission but did so in record time.

Each of these women have their own individual stories but many of them are similar to Ms. Veasey's. A desire to serve their country. They didn't set out to make history but they did so anyway.

They served their country honorably and extraordinarily. And came home with little fanfare or ceremony, which they did not mind. And many, like Ms. Veasey, continued to contribute to their communities after they came home.

I am pleased that we are recognizing these women and that this story of service will no longer be lost to history. This postal designation will help ensure that Ms. Veasey's service and dedication is remembered in her local community.

A few years ago, I was pleased to spearhead a successful effort in Congress, along with Senator MORAN, to award the Six Triple Eight with the Congressional Gold Medal so that their service cannot only be appropriately acknowledged but remembered across our Nation.

Ms. Veasey passed away at the age 100 in 2018 and was buried in Raleigh National Cemetery. Sadly, there are less than a handful of surviving members of the Six Triple Eight, including Anna Mae Robertson of Milwaukee, WI.

Through efforts like this, we ensure that their story of service and sacrifice does not remain lost to history and help to inspire the next generation to military service.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF MINNESOTA STATE REPRESENTATIVE BRIAN DANIELS

HON. BRAD FINSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. FINSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Minnesota House Representative Brian Daniels. First elected in 2014 to represent then-District 24B, Representative Daniels has served the people of Minnesota honorably in the State House for the past ten years, most recently representing District 19A.

Representative Daniels has worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents in Dodge, Goodhue, Rice, Steele, and Waseca counties, particularly with his leadership in championing the priorities of the blind and deaf communities across Minnesota.

Throughout his time in office, Representative Daniels introduced numerous bills advocating for greater language access statewide; including legislation that would increase proficiency standards to teach American Sign Language, as well as legislation that would require elementary schools to screen for dyslexia.

Additionally, he authored legislation to place signage on Interstate 35, directing drivers to Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf and Minnesota State Academy of the Blind in Faribault, bringing awareness to travelers from across the country about these outstanding educational institutions that we are proud to have in southern Minnesota.

Representative Daniels has done an exemplary job representing the people of District 19A, and all of us across southern Minnesota have been well-served by his time in office. I wish him the warmest congratulations on his retirement.

CELEBRATING INEZ BEISWANGER'S 105TH BIRTHDAY

HON. RUDY YAKYM III

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Mr. YAKYM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate and wish a very happy and special birthday to Inez Beiswanger, who will turn a whopping 105 years old on December 9, 2024.

Born in Nappanee in 1919, Inez is a resident of Milford, Indiana and one of the many